

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Virginia
COUNTY:	Cumberland
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

1. NAME

COMMON:	Muddy Creek Mill
AND/OR HISTORIC:	Muddy Creek Mills

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:			
CITY OR TOWN:		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:	
Tamworth		Fifth (W. C. Daniel)	
STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Virginia	51	Cumberland	049

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC																				
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work In progress																				
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate): <table border="0"> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Government</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Park</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Transportation</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Comments</td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Commercial</td> <td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Educational</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Military</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Religious</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Museum</td> <td><input type="checkbox"/> Scientific</td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>				<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments	<input type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)		<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious			<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific		
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<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious																					
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific																					

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:	M. Eldridge Blanton, Jr.
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN:	Tamworth
STATE:	Virginia
CODE	51

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:	Cumberland County Court House
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN:	Cumberland Court House
STATE:	Virginia
CODE	51

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:	HABSI
DATE OF SURVEY:	1958
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:	Library of Congress
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN:	Washington
STATE:	D. C.
CODE	11

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## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Although Muddy Creek Mill can be assigned three definite eighteenth century building periods from between 1750 and 1800, the building stands today as a visually integrated unit of late-eighteenth-century vernacular industrial architecture. Characterized by its steep gable roof shingled with Buckingham slate and broken by a double tier of dormer windows, the Muddy Creek Mill is a large two-story structure with two half stories and rests on a down slope basement. The basement and first floor of the mill are built of local sandstone laid up in rubble masonry. A date stone from 1785 initialed "R.J. (Richard James)/ C.L. Moren M (mason)" set in the exterior of the south end wall commemorates the mill's second building period. The building's second floor is brick laid in Flemish bond without the use of glazed header patterns or rubbed brickwork common to many eighteenth-century buildings. While portions of the second floor walls show various periods of repair, particularly the southeast corner of the building, most of the masonry is original and unaltered, even retaining in places the eighteenth-century mason's tooled mortar joints. In contrast to the first two floors, the top two half stories are of frame construction with frame gable ends sheathed with beaded weatherboards. The entire structure was at one time heated by two corner chimneys, one each in the northwest and southwest corners of the building, although the latter has been partially destroyed.

Although the Muddy Creek Mill is known to have run at least four stands of buhrs in the early nineteenth century, the grinding apparatus was converted to roller mills around 1910. On the first floor of the mill however, one stand of millstones continued in operation producing corn meal and feed until the mill ceased production in the 1950's. Except for this run of stones and discarded set of French buhrs the first floor of the mill is largely vacant although a small office space remains in the northwest corner of the building. This small office, a rare survival of its kind, is characterized by its simple vertical board partition walls, double beaded chairboard and hanging corner cupboard with H hinges.

The second floor of the mill contains a six break roller mill system manufactured by the Salem Machine and Foundry Works of Salem, Virginia. In addition to its complement of roller mills, the second floor also contains elevators, flour packing equipment and a second corner office of later date. The third and fourth floors of the mill contain various pieces of bolting and sifting equipment including bran reels, rolling bolters, shaking sifters and creepers. Throughout the mill are horizontally battened Dutch doors including several with original hardware. Similarly the mill retains much of its six-over-six sash on the upper levels and simple wooden grills on the lower floors.

Water power for the mill was originally channeled from a dam approximately three hundred yards upstream, through a long earthen race and onto a single overshot wooden waterwheel. This system was removed in the early twentieth century and replaced with the current arrangement of a concrete dam at the south end of the mill which directed water through a concrete race onto a pair of tandem mixed flow water turbines. Located in a concrete penstock directly under the southeast corner of the mill these turbines operated independent of each other, the first being adjusted from the first floor to run a single stand of millstones through a simple system of direct gearing, while the second turbine, controlled from the second floor, transmitted its power to the roller mills, elevators and bolters by belt drive. Although

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## SIGNIFICANCE

## PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Pre-Columbian☐ 16th Century☒ 18th Century☐ 20th Century☐ 15th Century☐ 17th Century☒ 19th Century

## SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1785, 1792

## AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

☐ Aboriginal☐ Education☐ Political☐ Urban Planning☐ Prehistoric☐ Engineering☐ Religion/Philosophy☒ Other (Specify)☐ Historic☒ Industry☐ ScienceTrade☐ Agriculture☐ Invention☐ Sculpture☒ Architecture☐ Landscape☐ Social/Humanitarian☐ Art☐ Architecture☐ Theater☒ Commerce☐ Literature☐ Transportation☐ Communications☐ Military☐ Conservation☐ Music

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Begun in the third quarter of the eighteenth century, the earliest portion of Muddy Creek Mill was erected by Nicholas Davies on Muddy Creek approximately one mile from its confluence with the James River. By 1785 the mill building had achieved its present dimensions under the ownership of Richard James, and by the late eighteenth century the mill had acquired its present appearance under a joint agreement filed in the Cumberland County Courts in March of 1792 between Richard James and "John Cunningham, Edward Cunningham and Edward Dillon, Merchants and partners." The agreement specified that Richard James raise the mill to its present elevation as a condition in a ten year lease. Throughout the eighteenth and early nineteenth century the Muddy Creek Mill was referred to in the plural because of the practice of noting milling operations which ran more than one run of millstones as mills.

The focal point of the small and picturesque community of Tamworth, Muddy Creek Mill was associated with now vanished blacksmith's, cooper's and sawyer's shops as well as the surviving miller's house, brick store and nearby eighteenth-century farm complex. Distinguished by its unusual architectural character the mill, built of stone, brick and frame, is an exceptionally large eighteenth-century industrial building measuring approximately thirty-eight by seventy-seven feet and is the only known extant mill structure in Virginia with a double tier of dormer windows. In addition to its distinctive appearance the Muddy Creek Mill also retains almost all of the early-twentieth-century grinding bolting machinery which replaced the earlier millstones and sifting equipment around 1910.

As an example of early American technology the Muddy Creek Mill reflects through numerous descriptions surviving in courthouse deeds and Mutual Assurance Society policies an extremely well documented instance of the technological evolution of a particular industrial structure from its first building period in the mid-eighteenth century to its final additions in 1911. Described as a manufacturing mill in the early nineteenth century, Muddy Creek Mill produced flour and other water-ground products for both local consumption and trade on the James River Canal throughout the nineteenth century. From the replacement of the original composite "Cologne buhrs" with four runs of solid millstones shortly after 1792 to the installation of a complement of Salem Roller Mills in the early twentieth century, the Muddy Creek Mill remained a working commercial enterprise for almost two hundred years until it ceased operation in the 1950's.

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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(Number all entries)

7.

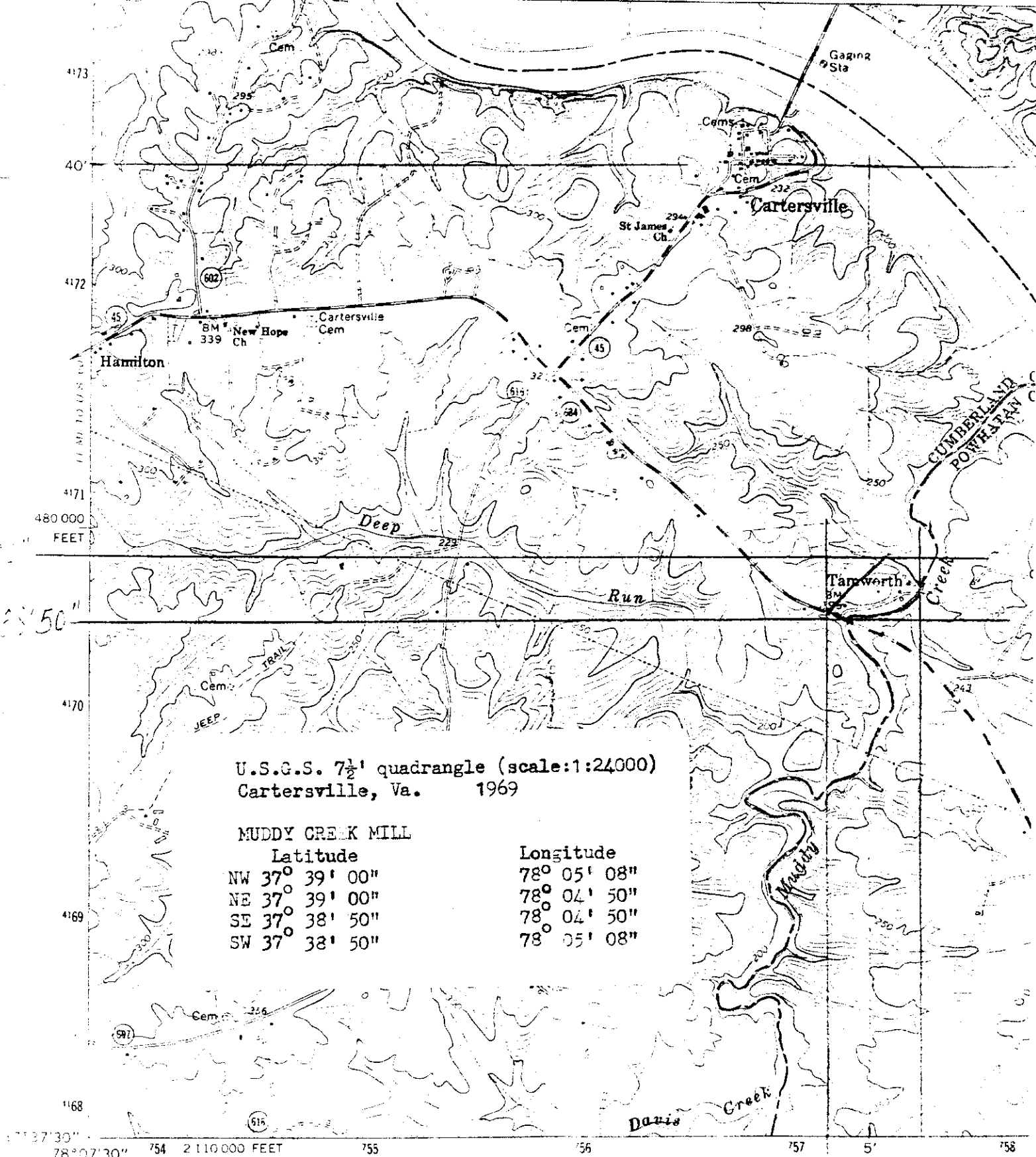
the Muddy Creek Mill is presently idle, the structure, gearing and machinery are all intact and despite recent flood damage could again be made operable.

The nucleus of the small community of Tamworth, Muddy Creek Mill is surrounded by several associated structures. Among these related buildings is a brick store built around 1800. Characterized by Flemish-bond walls on rubble stone masonry foundations, the store was altered in the early twentieth century, including roof and interior modifications and the construction of a frame wing onto the north wall. Distinguished by its well-executed, shingle-style pedimented gables with louvered lunettes, segmentally arched windows with six-over-six sash and fine battened shutters, this modest building still serves as the local Post Office and general store. Behind the store is an extremely altered early-nineteenth-century frame miller's house.

Overlooking the Muddy Creek Mill, store and miller's house from an adjacent hill is a late-eighteenth-century farmhouse. Before early-twentieth-century alterations, this simple frame building was characterized by its three-bay first-floor facade capped by a two-bay second-story level. To the rear of the building was a shed addition with a rather large exterior end chimney. The main block of the house was served by two exterior end chimneys built of brick laid in Flemish bond. Modern alterations included the introduction of a central bay at the second-story level of the house, the removal of a mid-nineteenth-century porch, the demolition of the early shed wing and the replacement of the original six-over-nine sash with modern two-over-two sash. In the yard of the house is a well-preserved frame dairy. Sheathed with beaded weatherboard, this late-eighteenth-century outbuilding is particularly noteworthy for its battened door, original sawn-work vents and slate roof.

In addition to the extant buildings in the Muddy Creek Mill community are the sites of various associated structures including a cooper's shop, blacksmith's shop and saw mill.

B.H.



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1958-1959. Field checked 1960

Revised from aerial photographs taken 1969. Field checked 1969

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
10,000-foot grid based on Virginia coordinate system, south zone  
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked.

ITEM GRID AND 1969 MAGNETIC NORTH  
DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

FOR